



**US Army Corps
of Engineers ®**
Walla Walla District

Joint News Release

News Release 08-01

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Corps, City of Pasco to sign Chiawana Park lease

PASCO, Wash. – The City of Pasco and the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will finalize a lease for operation of Chiawana Park on Thursday, January 10.

The signing event is set for 10:30 a.m. in the council chambers of Pasco's City Hall, located at 525 N. Third Avenue. Walla Walla District Commander Lt. Col. Anthony J. Hofmann and City of Pasco Mayor Joyce Olson will be the signatories for the new lease.

The City of Pasco will assume full operation of the park and approximately 2 miles of paved path that serves more than 250,000 visitors each year.

Chiawana Park, located at Columbia River Mile 334 on the east river bank near Pasco, Wash., first opened to the public in 1968. The park had been leased to Franklin County from 1968 through 2005. In 2006, the City of Pasco began operating the park and shoreline under a Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Corps, which enabled the City to determine what their costs for future operation of the park and shoreline would be. This was done instead of closing the park and shoreline to public use as required by Corps' policy in the event of lease relinquishment. Operation under the Challenge Cost Share Agreement continued through 2007 as the Corps and the City worked to develop a lease agreement.

Chiawana Park and the Columbia River shoreline offer Tri-City residents and visitors nearly 150 acres of shady lawn for relaxation and bright, sunny paved paths for walking, running or cycling along the river.

The park offers a variety of facilities including several group picnic shelters, horseshoe pits, a playground, two restroom facilities, a boat ramp, two courtesy boat docks, ample parking and room to roam. The picnic shelters may be reserved for group functions for a small fee by contacting the City of Pasco Recreation Department at (509) 545-3456.

The park paths and boat ramp are accessible year round. Other facilities are open seasonally from about April 1 through September 30.

For more information about Walla Walla District's outdoor recreation opportunities, check out their Web site at: www.nww.usace.army.mil/corpsoutdoors/. For more information about the City of Pasco's recreation opportunities, go to www.pasco-wa.gov/Portal/Play.

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE ONLINE

www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/pa/NR/NR08_files/NR08-01PIX/NR08-01PIXPage.htm

MEDIA ADVISORY: Mayor Olson and Lt. Col. Hofmann will be available for interviews following the signing event. Print and broadcast outlets should plan to be set up and ready in position at least 15 minutes prior to the start of this event. Parking in the back of City Hall provides the most direct access to the council chambers.

DIRECTIONS TO PASCO CITY HALL -- City Hall is located at the corner of Sylvester Street and N. Third Avenue. From I-182 East/US-12 East towards Pasco/Spokane ~ Take the N. Fourth Avenue Exit (Exit #13/ City Center Exit) ~ Turn South onto N. Fourth Avenue; Turn East onto W. Marie Street ~ Turn South onto N. Third Avenue.

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a brief history of

Chiawana Park

*** Chiawana Park, located at Columbia River Mile 334 on the east river bank near Pasco, Wash., first opened to the public in 1968 and was leased to Franklin County for operation as a public day-use area.**

*** In the 1970s, additional Corps' land was added to the lease to provide a multi-user paved path east of the park to Road 54. Franklin County was operating the park and approximately 2 miles of paved path along the Columbia River.**

*** The county relinquished the majority of their leased area at the end of 2005, retaining only the Road 54 boat launch area**

*** In 2006, the City of Pasco and the Corps operated the park and shoreline under a Challenge Cost Share Agreement which enabled the City to better determine what their costs for future operation of the park and shoreline would be. This was done instead of closing the park and shoreline to public use as required by Corps' policy in the event of lease relinquishment.**

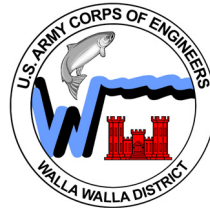
*** Operation under the Challenge Cost Share Agreement continued through 2007 as the Corps and the City worked to develop a lease agreement that would allow continued use of the area by over 250,000 visitors annually.**

Chiawana Park and the Columbia River shoreline offer Tri-City residents and visitors nearly 150 acres of shady lawn for relaxation and bright, sunny paved paths for walking, running or cycling along the Columbia River.

Chiawana Park offers a variety of facilities including several group picnic shelters, horse shoe pits, a childrens' playground, two restroom facilities, boat ramp, two courtesy boat docks, ample parking, almost 2 miles of walking paths and room to roam.

The park's day-use area is typically open from about April 1 through September 30. The park paths and boat ramp can be accessed year round. Picnic shelters may be reserved for group functions for a fee by contacting the City of Pasco Recreation Department at (509) 545-3456.

The Corps of Engineers will be replacing the courtesy boat dock on the west end of the park. The new fish-friendly and ADA-accessible dock is expected to be complete by the end of February. The City of Pasco has plans for future renovation of the playground on the east end of the park and the nearby restroom. Chiawana Park will open for the 2008 season on March 29.



For more information about
the Walla Walla District,
contact the Public Affairs Office
at (509) 527-7020 ~ cenww-pa@usace.army.mil
Or, visit online ~ www.nwww.usace.army.mil



For more information about
the City of Pasco,
contact the City at (509) 545-3080
email ~ www.pasco-wa.gov/Webform/ContactUs
Or, visit online ~ www.pasco-wa.gov

